GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6531
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2015
OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any policy to promote open source software;

(b) if so, the details of the schemes, funds allocated and achievements made so far, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether National Informatics Centre (NIC) has training programmes for ensuring adequacy of skill in open source technology;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the Government has instructed all Ministries and departments to put in the public domain the source code of software and applications developed by them, primarily for e-governance projects, to avoid duplication and to make the project cost effective and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) has notified the "Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software for Government of India" which would encourage the formal adoption and use of Open Source Software (OSS) in Government Organizations.

As per this policy, all Government Organizations, while implementing e-Governance applications and systems, must ensure compliance of this policy and decide by comparing both OSS and Closed Source Software (CSS) options with respect to capability, strategic control, scalability, security, life-time costs and support requirements. However, in certain specialised domains where OSS solutions meeting essential functional requirements may not be available or in case of urgent / strategic need to deploy CSS based solutions or lack of expertise (skill set) in identified technologies, the concerned Government Organization may consider exceptions, with sufficient justification. The "Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software for Government of India" formulated by DeitY, is available https://egovstandards.gov.in/sites/default/files/Published%20Documents/ policy_on_adoption_of_oss_0.pdf .

(c) and (d): Yes, Sir. National Informatics Centre (NIC) has various training programmes for ensuring adequacy of skill in open source technology. During 2007-14, 64 training programmes including specialized trainings for Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) were organized and more than 1200 participants were trained on various open source technology domains.

(e): No, Sir. However, a policy on "Collaborative Application Development by Opening the Source Code of Government Applications" has been approved by Hon'ble MCIT and the gazette notification is underway. The policy intends to increase the pace of application development and rapid roll out / implementation by adopting the principles of open source development model. The Government intends to promote reuse of existing developed applications. The successfully running and new applications are envisaged to be developed within the public domain by opening the application source code. It is also intended to encourage innovation - inside and outside the Government by encouraging collaborative development to develop better products in less time.